



FOR OUR YOUNGSTERS

W. G. van de Hulst

**LOST
IN THE
SNOW**

V.d.Hulst 1911

Helen 2

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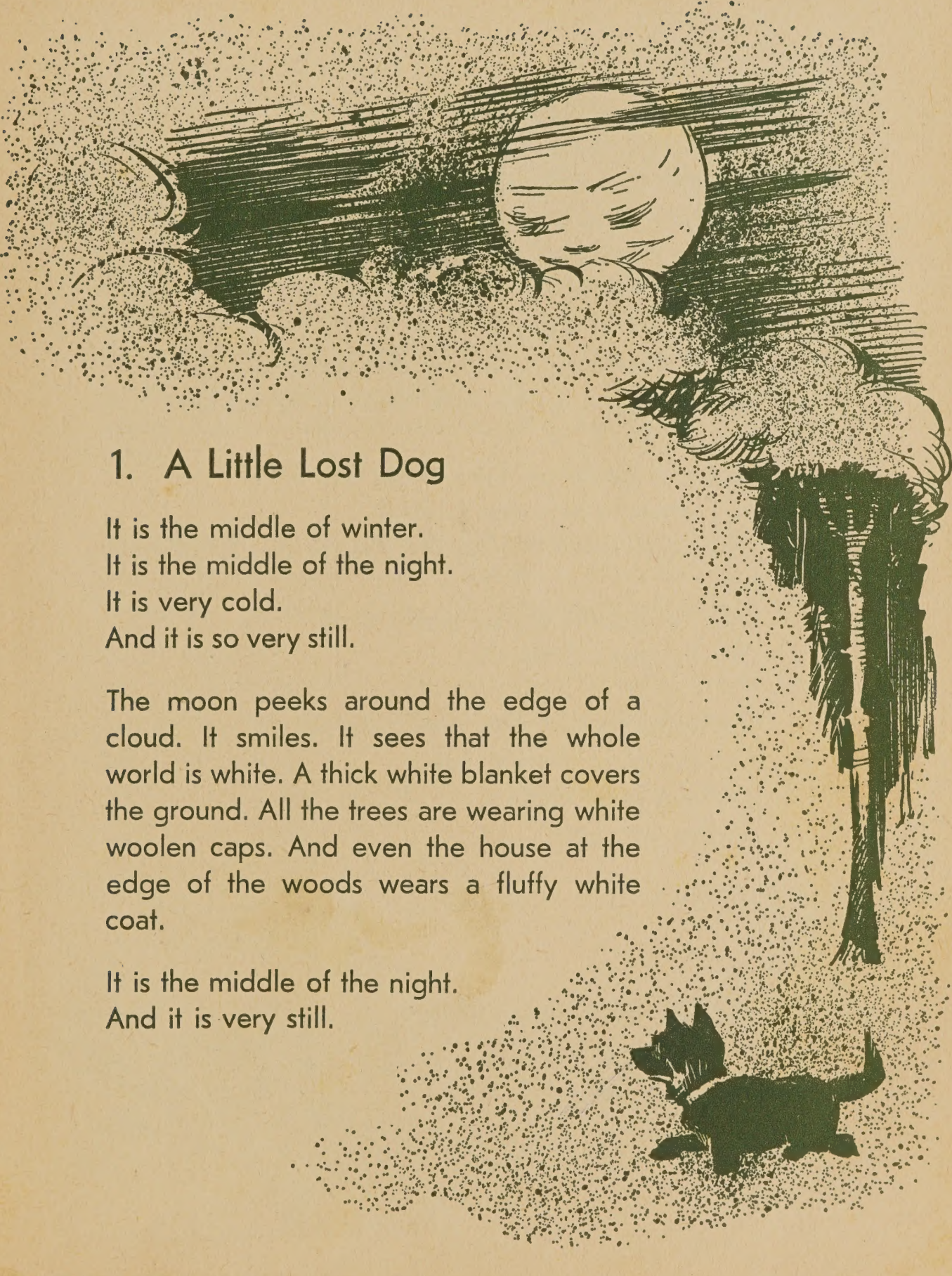
BY

W. G. VAN DE HULST



WOUDSTRA'S BOOKHOUSE, EDMONTON-ALTA-CANADA





1. A Little Lost Dog

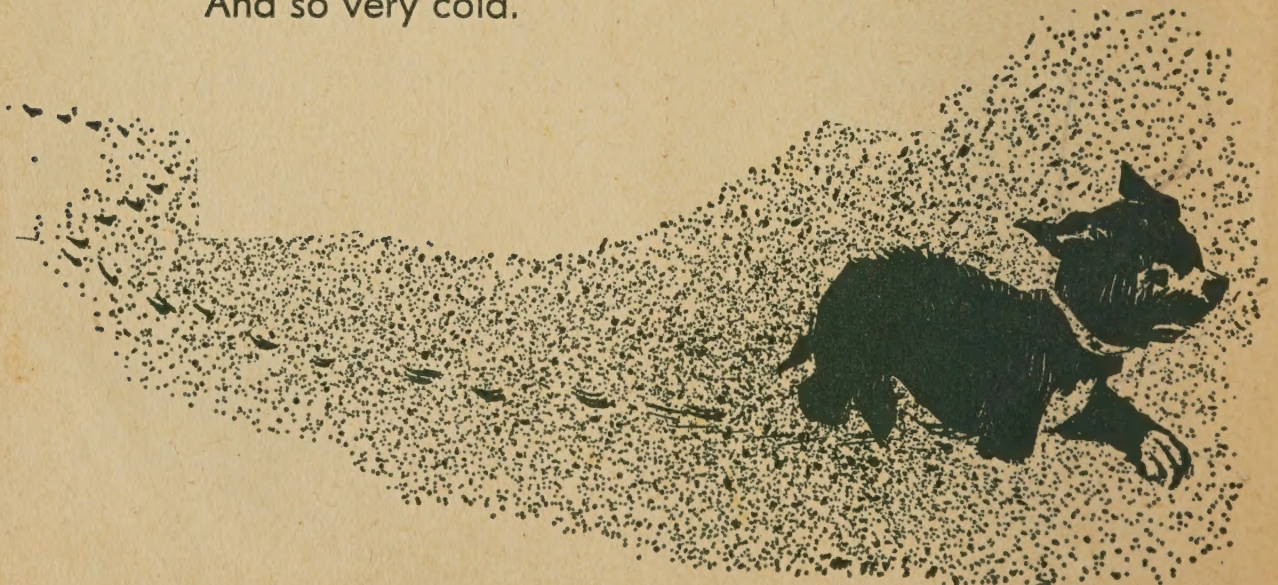
It is the middle of winter.
It is the middle of the night.
It is very cold.
And it is so very still.

The moon peeks around the edge of a cloud. It smiles. It sees that the whole world is white. A thick white blanket covers the ground. All the trees are wearing white woolen caps. And even the house at the edge of the woods wears a fluffy white coat.

It is the middle of the night.
And it is very still.

But then . . . Along comes a little dog.
He whines. He shivers in the cold.
His little legs sink deep down in the snow.
The poor little dog is lost.
He has come from the woods.
He scratches at the door of a little house.
No, it is not his home.
He whines again . . . but no one hears him.
He sits down, on his hind legs . . . but no one sees him.
Where is his home? He can not find it.
And where is his warm basket?
He whines again . . . but there is no one to listen to him.
Then he returns to the dark woods.
Oh! the poor little dog.

The moon hides behind the clouds again.
And the night is very dark.
It is very quiet again.
And so very cold.



2. Early Morning

The night has gone.

The day is coming.

The little house at the edge of the woods is almost hidden under its lovely white coat of snow.

But look! From the chimney rises a thin wisp of smoke, a little blue cloud of smoke.

Some one is awake in that house even though it is still very early.

Yès, here comes Father. He is wearing his heavy coat, and he has a shovel over his shoulder. He is smoking his pipe . . . and he is wearing a trainman's cap with a red band on it.

It is very cold so early in the morning. But Father takes big steps. That makes him feel awake. That helps to keep him warm.

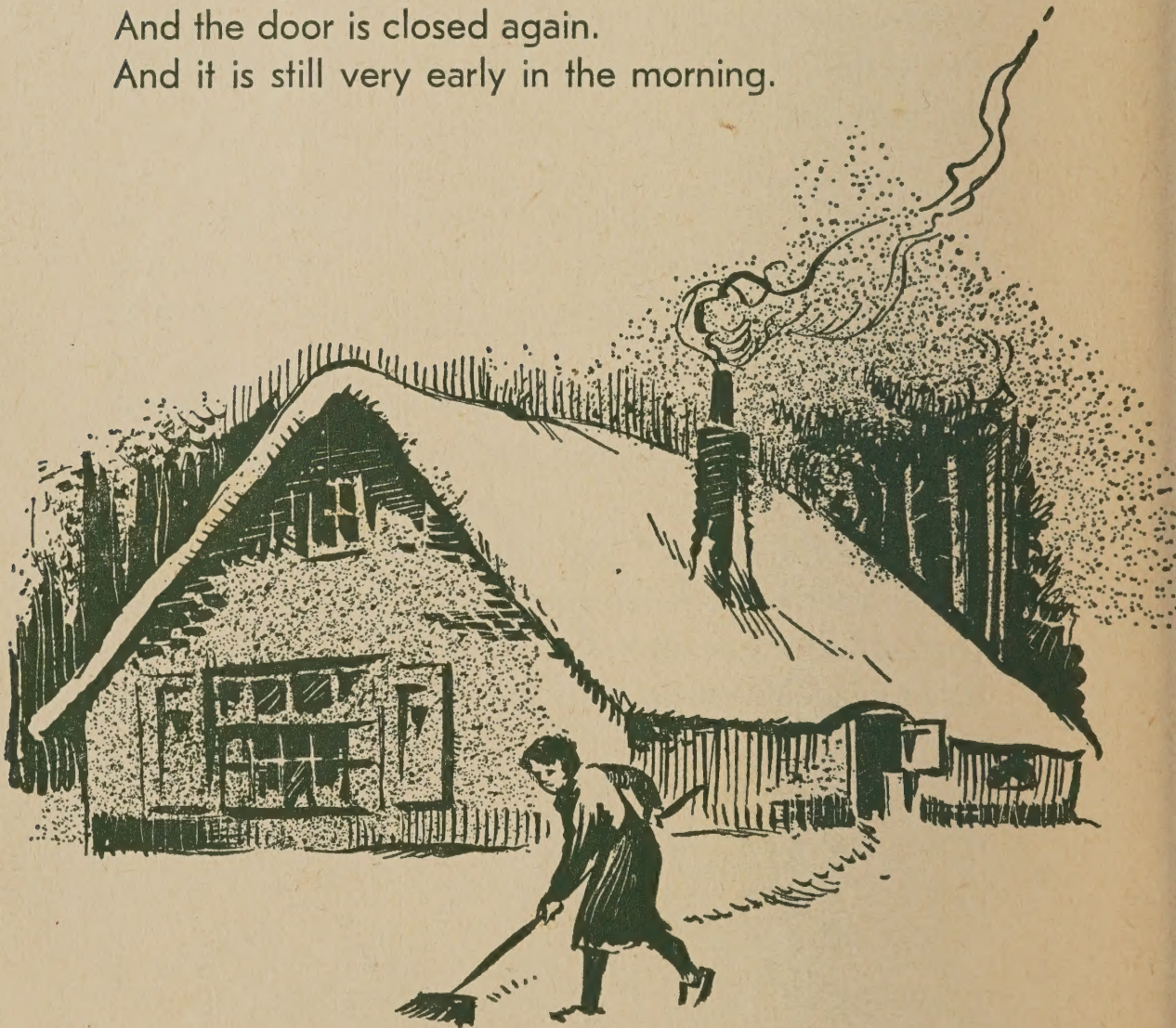
And now the door of the little house is shut again. It is still very early in the morning.

The sun does not look very friendly.

It is not wide awake. It is too early in the morning. And it is too cold.

And now the door of the little house opens once more.

This time Mother is coming out.
She has a broom in her hand. With it she makes a
path through the snow.
Brrrr... It is bitterly cold.
Mother sweeps quickly. That makes her feel wide
awake. That helps to keep her warm.
She scatters some bread crusts for the birds.
Then she quickly goes back into the warm little house.
And the door is closed again.
And it is still very early in the morning.



3. The Dark Cave

It is quiet in the little house.
Mother is peeling potatoes.
The coffee pot simmers on the stove.
The fire crackles in the fireplace.
And little Jeannie turns restlessly in her crib.

But suddenly! . . . Bump, thump! . . . Thump, bump!
What is that noise upstairs?
Bump. Thump! What can it be?
Oh, it is Dickie jumping out of bed.
And Danny jumps out of his bed.
They both run down the stairs . . . in their bare feet.
Brrrr . . . It was so cold upstairs, but here it is cosy and warm.

Dickie is the youngest.
But he is the first one downstairs.
"Shhhhhh!" says Mother. "Shhhhhh! Be quiet! Your little sister is still asleep."

Then the two little boys get down on their knees in front of the fireplace. They hold out their hands to warm them.

It is so cozy in front of the fire.
Mother gives them each a cup of hot milk.
She tells them, "Don't make any noise, boys. Remember little Jeannie is still sleeping."



The fire crackles.
The coffee pot simmers.
And once more it is very quiet in the little room.

But then Dickie has an idea . . .
He pulls at Mother's apron.
He whispers, "Mother, may we please? May we?" . . .
Mother smiles. She knows what her little boys want.
She nods. Yes, you may.



Yes, they may play in Mother and Father's bed for a little while.

Quickly the boys run to the big bed.

Dickie crawls in first.

They both crawl very far under the thick blankets.

This is so very cozy.

They hide in the dark hole like two little mice afraid of the cat.

Then Dickie has an idea...

"Listen, Danny, let's play that we are lost. Shall we? Let's play that we are in a forest

and we are afraid of all the wild animals. And then we will make a deep cave in the snow and we'll hide in it because we are so scared. Shall we, Danny?" "Yes, let's play that. That sounds like fun," said Danny. And there they go away down to the foot-end of the bed. It is so cozy and warm, so very dark in that deep cave.

And they are so pleasantly afraid.

Little Jeannie is waking up.

Her crib creaks.

A little voice calls, "Mommie, Mommie!"

The boys in the cave hear it, and now they are more scared than ever, so very frightened!

And Dickie says, "Do you hear that bear growling?"

"Shhhhh..." whispers Danny, "Let's keep very quiet. I don't think it will find us then."

But then... Look!... A little bare foot comes into the cave... And then another one. Mother laughs. She puts little Jeannie into the cave, too.

Then Dickie growls, "I'm a bear now. Grrrrr."

And Danny growls too, "Grrrrr. I'm a bear too."

Then both bears pounce on the poor little girl. They want to tear her to pieces.

But Jeannie only laughs. This is fun.

Oh! Oh! Too bad. Now the cave is all gone. It has tumbled in.

Mother calls, "Time's up. Everybody out. Time to get dressed and have breakfast. Come now."

And outside is the white, white world. And it is so very cold.

The sun looks a bit friendlier now.

It isn't so sleepy anymore.

And, oh, how it makes that white, white world sparkle!

4. Coffee for Father

Slowly, very slowly, the sun climbs higher and higher in the sky.

Once more the door of the little house opens. This time two boys go outside. Dickie goes first. They are wearing their thick jackets. And their warm caps are pulled down over their ears. Brrrr . . . It is so very cold outside. Dickie and Danny don't mind the cold. They are brave little lads. They take big steps. That helps to keep them warm. Danny is carrying a coffee pot full of hot coffee. It is for Father. It is a funny little coffee pot with a long spout. There is a string tied over the cover. Danny holds it tightly against his chest. When he takes big steps the funny little coffee pot says, "Cluck, cluck, cluck!" Mother watches as her brave little boys leave. And Jeannie watches too. She watches from behind Mother's apron. "Hurry now, boys," says Mother. "First you take the little path, you know, until you come to the road. Then take the road until you come to the train tracks.



Father is working there. You will have to look for him. He will be so glad to have the hot coffee. But do hurry!"

"Yes, Mother, we will," says Danny.

"Yes Mother," says Dickie. He leads the way.

They often brought coffee to Father.

Oh, yes, they know the way very well.

"Be careful, boys!" calls Mother. "Be sure to turn at the big tree, or you will come to the 'Three Old

Men'. Then you will certainly be lost. Be very careful!"

"Yes, Mother," says Danny.

"Yes, Mother," calls Dickie.

They take big, long steps.

And the funny little coffee pot says, "Cluck, cluck!"

Once more the door of the little house is closed.

And two little boys are all alone in a great, wide world of white.

Their shoes sink deeply into the snow. The cold nips at their rosy cheeks.

Dickie and Danny don't mind. They are sturdy little lads.

The sun looked through its veil of clouds.

It made an angry face.

Then it hid. It hid behind a big, gray cloud.

That wasn't very kind of the sun.

5. The Wild Animal

"I know the way very well," boasted Dickie.

"So do I," Danny said, "but you are walking too fast."

"And you are too slow."

"But you don't have to carry a coffee pot, and I do."

"But I have to go ahead to lead the way," said Dickie.

And just then he fell and one foot sank deeply in a snow-covered ditch.

Poor Dickie. When he pulled his foot out of the ditch his shoe had come off.

Quickly Danny set his coffee pot in the snow.

Then he went to help Dickie.

Yes, Danny was the oldest. He had to help his little brother.

Soon they came to the big tree in the woods.

There they turned out to the road.

Yes, they were brave little lads.

But suddenly Dickie became frightened.

"Look, Danny, look over there!"

And Danny looked too.

They were too frightened to move.

Far down the road they saw something black.

And it was moving.



It was running.

And it was running toward them!

An animal! A hideous, black animal!

They knew there were rabbits in the woods. But this was something strange. This was a fierce and dreadful animal. It seemed to have no legs at all.

"I'm afraid," whispered Dickie.

"Come on," said Danny, "come on!"

And he pulled Dickie behind some bushes.

The snow from the branches made them all white.

They crept farther and farther through the bushes until they came to another path. But this was a crooked path, a very crooked path.

"Let's take this path," said Dickie, "he won't find us here."

"Yes," said Danny, "and let's be very quiet, so he won't hear us."

And so they followed the narrow, crooked little path just as quietly as they could. They took big steps and sometimes they even walked on tip-toe.

They did not dare to talk. Oh, no, if they did the fierce animal would hear them.

But then Dickie whispered, "Perhaps it was a wild boar or a wolf. Or maybe it was a little bear."

"Yes," said Danny, "perhaps it was! Let's run!"



6. Down the Crooked Path

Oh my! What a crooked path they were on now. First it turned this way, then it twisted that way. And you couldn't even see the end.

"But where are the train tracks now?" asked Dickie.

"I don't know," said Danny, "but let's run a bit faster, then perhaps we'll get there sooner."

"Yes, let's do," said Dickie.

Their shoes said, "Crunch, crunch, crunch" on the snow.

And the little coffee pot said, "Cluck, cluck, cluck," because they were running so fast.

They ran on and on.

But where were the railroad tracks?

They were nowhere to be seen.

Then Dickie became a bit frightened.

He called, "Father, Father! Where are you, Father?"

And then Danny called too.

But their voices sounded so small, so tiny in that great, white world of snow. And no one heard them calling.

There were tears in their eyes.

But no one saw those tears.

"Dickie, what if we are lost?" said Danny. "What if we can't find..."

And just then they heard a noise, a strange noise in the bushes nearby.

"Oh, the animal, the wild animal!" screamed Dickie and he ran as fast as he could.

Danny ran too. And the little coffee pot said, "Cluck, cluck, cluck," very fast.

They hid behind a big tree.

They trembled with fright.

They didn't even dare to peek.

But then . . . all was quiet again.

Dickie began to cry.

"I want to go home to Mother."

"Yes," said Danny, "I want to go home to Mother, too."

But they couldn't go back now. That horrid animal would be waiting for them.

And so they went farther and farther along that crooked path.

Very carefully they went. They looked back again and again.

But the woods were so big, . . . and the snow was so white, . . . and the path was so crooked, . . . and they could not find their little house at all.

Poor little boys!

7. The Train is Coming

Poor little lads.
They were so tired.
They were so cold.
And they were so frightened.
Then it started to snow again,
very gently.
Danny looked up.
And suddenly the air was
filled with big, fluffy snow-
flakes.
One big snowflake fell on
Danny's chin.
One fell on his eye.
And one fell on his nose.

But Dickie didn't look up.
Oh no, he saw something
else.
"Look, Danny, look over
there, through the trees."
Danny looked where Dickie
pointed and he saw it too.



A high pole with little white knobs on top... and many long wires.

Dickie started to run toward it. And Danny followed. And the funny little coffee pot said, "Cluck, cluck!"

Yes, there is another pole,... and another one,... and another!

The long wires are thick and heavy with the snow. And all the little knobs are wearing white woolen caps.

Yes, there are the train tracks at last.

Father should be there. Now they will find him.

"Father... Father... Faaaaather!"

But where is Father now?

Father doesn't answer. He isn't here at all.

They look everywhere.

They call. They shout. They try to climb the bank, but they only slide back down.

Father is nowhere to be seen. He wears a red band on his trainman's cap.

But there isn't anything red here. Everything is white, so very white.

And the railroad runs on and on through the woods and far, far out into the world.

It is so quiet in the woods, so very, very still.

And the boys are all alone in the woods and so very, very frightened.

"Father," calls Dickie again, "Father, where are you?"



But Father does not answer.
Father cannot hear his little boy.

Oh, those poor, poor little boys.
They walk beside the tracks, through the thick snow.
They are both crying.
Big flakes of snow whirl all around them.
Listen! . . . What is the rumbling noise? It comes from
far off in the distance. The ground trembles under
their feet.
The noise grows louder and louder. They can see
something small, and black, and far away. And the
ground trembles more and more.
The little speck grows larger and larger. They can see
a white plume above it.



Yes, a train is coming! It is coming nearer and nearer. The boys watch it come closer and closer. They feel much better. Now they will not be all alone.

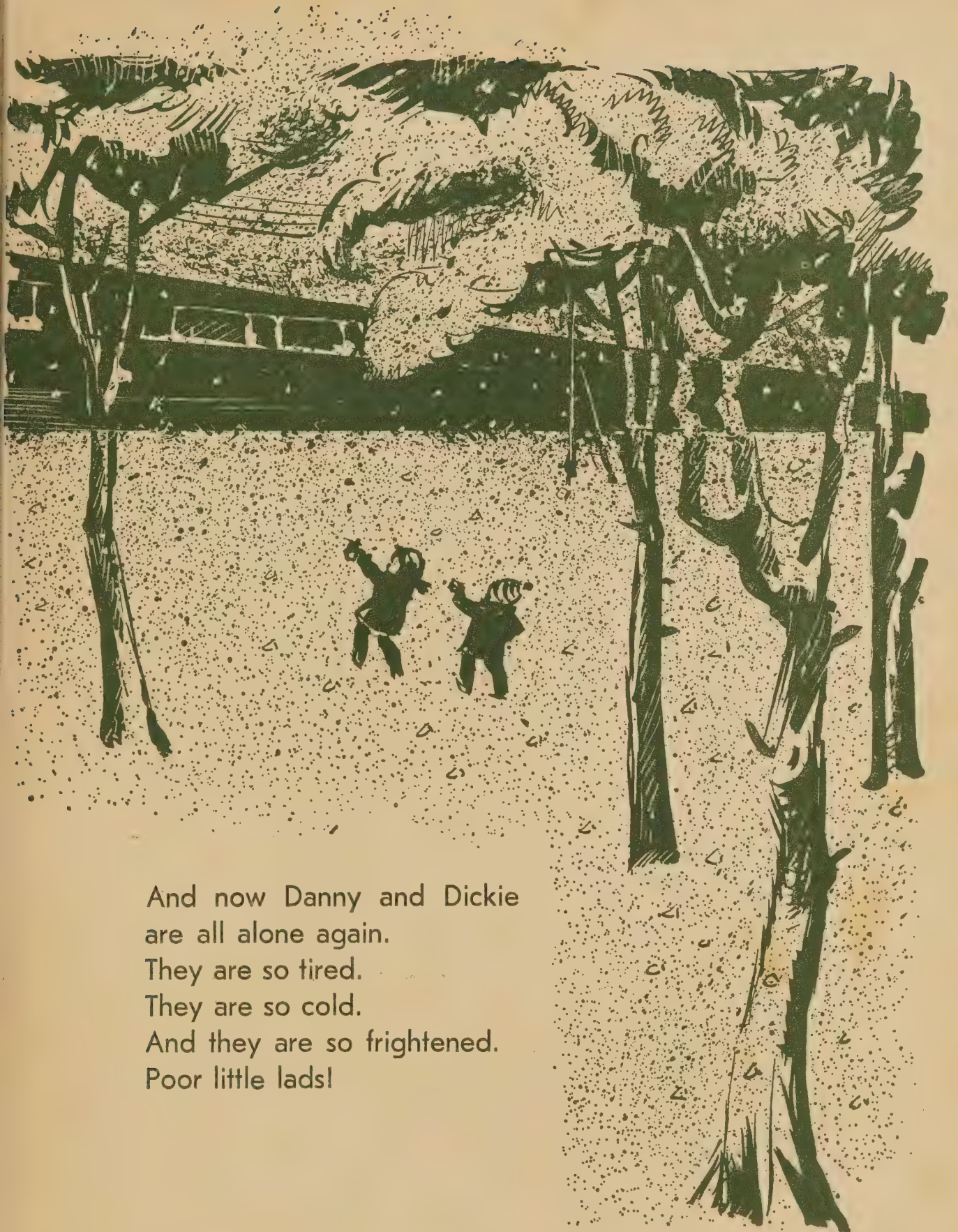
They wave their hands. Danny holds the funny little coffee pot high in the air. They try to call. They want to ask about Father.

But the train doesn't stop. It doesn't stop at all. It thunders right on past them. The smoke blows in their eyes.

They shout. They try to run after it.

Dickie falls. He falls face down in the deep snow.

The train becomes smaller and smaller... and then it is gone.



And now Danny and Dickie
are all alone again.
They are so tired.
They are so cold.
And they are so frightened.
Poor little lads!

8. Who Will Hear Them?

The train was gone. It was far, far away now.
And it was so still, so very quiet in the woods again.
The poor boys went back to the crooked little path.
There was nowhere else to go.
Danny said, "Perhaps we will see our house soon."
But they could not find their house.
They could not find Father.
They could not find Mother or Jeannie.

The boys followed the crooked little path until they
came to a stream.
There was no bridge and they could not cross it.
The dark water flowed gently and the snowflakes
that fell in the water drowned. Every one of them.
Dickie sobbed, "I want to go home. I want Mother."
They followed the path along the stream.
Both boys had big tears in their eyes.
Their hands were blue with the cold.
And Danny held his coffee pot first in one hand and
then in the other. And each time the little coffee pot
would say, "Cluck".

They came to a bend in the stream.

And there . . . Oh, how they scared!
Both boys saw them at the same time . . . 'The Three
Old Men'!

Now they were lost! Mother had said so.

Yes, now they really knew they were lost.

They were too frightened to move.

'The Three Old Men' stood huddled together. Their
backs were bent and their bodies were hollow. They
had very big heads and their long stiff hairs stood
straight up.

On their crooked backs they each wore a thick white
coat. And on their big heads they wore a heavy white
cap.

The three of them silently watched the stream where
the poor snowflakes were drowning in the dark water.

'The Three Old Men', what were they . . . ?

They were three old trees. Three old, hollow, crooked
willowtrees at the edge of the stream.

Yes, now indeed they were lost. Mother had said so.
"When you come to the Three Old Men, then you are
lost." Yes, and it was their own fault.

"I'm so tired," sobbed Dickie. His legs were shaking.
He went to sit down against the crooked back of one
of the 'Old Men'. He sank deep in the soft snow.

Danny snuggled close to him. He set the coffee pot close by and it said, "Cluck," very gently.

Danny put his arm around his little brother and said, "Don't cry, Dickie." But his own tears fell on Dickie's hand.

"I'm so scared, Danny, I'm so afraid because we are lost," he sobbed. He snuggled closer to Danny, as if he were trying to hide.

"Oh, Danny, I'm so afraid."

Then Danny said very gently, "Listen, Dickie, listen to me." And he whispered something in Dickie's ear.

Dickie nodded, "Yes," he whispered, "yes, let's do that right now."

Then the two little boys kneeled down in the snow. They bowed their heads.

They folded their hands and closed their eyes.

Only their lips moved as they said something in soft voices.

It was very quiet in the great, white woods, and so very lonely.

Who could hear those tiny voices?

But those little boys knew Who could hear them.

And they didn't feel quite so lonely any more.

They didn't feel quite so frightened any more.



9. Bobbie

Do you hear that strange scratchy sound? The boys do not hear it.

But it is coming closer. It is getting louder. They can hear it now.

It comes nearer and nearer. It is very close now.

Could it be that horrid wild animal?

And then . . .

Then suddenly something came around the bend. It was running toward them.

"Arf, arf, arf!"

Oh, yes, it was an animal. But it was only a cute little dog.

"Arf, arf, arf!"

He barked with joy.

He wiggled and jumped and he wagged his tail.

He jumped on Dickie's lap and licked his nose.

He barked and barked. He was so happy.

He barked as if to say, "I was lost. I was so lonesome.

But now I'm not alone any more. Oh, no, this is much better. Now everything will be alright.

He put his nose inside of Dickie's warm jacket. He curled up on Dickie's lap as if he were in his warm basket at home.



Danny and Dickie had never seen this little lost dog before.

The poor little thing shivered with the cold.

Dickie tried to cover him with the corner of his jacket.

"Just think," said Dickie, "it wasn't even a fierce wild animal that frightened us. It was just this cute little dog. Weren't we foolish?"

"Yes," said Danny, "I guess we were."

And then for just a little while they forgot all about being lost and alone. They forgot all about being cold and tired.

The poor little dog was so hungry. He sniffed at the coffee pot. What was in it? Something good to eat? But the funny little coffee pot only said, "Cluck."

"Shall we take him along?" asked Dickie. "Shall we take him home with us?"

"Yes," said Danny. "Yes, let's take him home. Come on, let's hurry!"

And for a little while they forgot that they, too, were lost; that they couldn't even find their own home.

And there they went. Dickie carried the little dog. Danny carried the coffee pot.

Two little lost boys and one little lost dog.

And not one of the three knew where his home was. The snowflakes whirled all around them. The thick, white blanket that covered the ground became thicker and thicker.

On and on they went.

And suddenly the path ended. And there were no more trees. They were out of the woods! In front of them lay a great, white field.

And, oh, look, there in the distance was a house! The boys could see the windows, and a door, and a chimney. And there was smoke coming from the chimney.

But this wasn't their house. This wasn't where Danny and Dickie lived. Oh, no, this was a strange farm house. They had never seen it before.

The two little lost boys were so happy to see it, even if it wasn't their home.

Then suddenly the little dog barked again, "Arf, arf, arf!" He wiggled, he twisted, he squirmed. He wanted to jump out of Dickie's arms. But Dickie didn't let him go. He held him tighter.

Dickie said, "He would only get lost again."

"Yes," said Danny, "be sure to hold on to him. We don't want him to get lost again."

Danny pointed to the farm house.

"Shall we go there, Dickie? Shall we ask the farmer if he knows where our house is? Do you dare?"

"I do," said Dickie. "Come on, let's go." And he hugged the dog a little bit tighter.



10. Bobbie's Home

And so they started to cross the big, white field.
The snow was so soft and so very deep. It came up
to their knees and sometimes it seemed as if the boys
had no legs at all.

They could hardly struggle through.

Sometimes Dickie lost his shoe in the deep snow.
And each time Danny had to look for it. Dickie
couldn't look for it. Oh, no, he must hold on to the
little dog.

And the little dog wiggled and squirmed and barked.
And sometimes it wagged its tail right in Dickie's
face.



But Dickie didn't let him go. Oh, no, he held him tighter than ever.

The boys were close to the farm house now. Dickie could hardly hold the little dog any more. It was so excited and so very wild.

"Look!" whispered Danny, "look!" He saw a face at one of the windows, a little girl's face. Then it was gone again.

And then the door opened wide.

And the little girl dashed outside. "Bobbie, Bobbie," she called.

And now Dickie couldn't hold the dog at all any

more. It wiggled right out of his arms and ran through the little gate.

"Arf, arf, arf! I'm back again! Here I am!"

Then the little girl picked up her Bobbie and hugged him.

And then . . . Oh, then she ran back into the house again. And the door was shut.

And there stood the poor little boys.

They didn't have their dog any more.

The door was shut.

And they didn't dare to open the gate.

What should they do now?

Then they saw another face at the window. It was the little girl's mother. She waved to them and then she came outside.

"Did you boys bring our Bobbie back home? That is just wonderful. You are good little lads. Oh, but you poor boys are so cold! Come on in . . . quickly."

And soon Danny and Dickie were sitting on a little bench by the fire. And they each had a big cup of hot milk. And each had two big cookies. And two pieces of candy.

Bobbie had some warm milk, too. And he had a piece of bread and a little bone.

And the little girl sat on the floor right next to her dog. She was so happy, so very happy to have Bobbie back home again.

The little girl's mother was happy, too. "You are such good boys. We are so glad you brought Bobbie back home again. The poor thing was out all night; out in the snow and the cold. And Minnie has been so sad." "But what do you have in your little coffee pot?" she asked. "And where were you going? And where do you live?"

Then all at once Dickie burst into tears again.

"I don't know," he sobbed, "we . . . we are lost."

"Lost!" cried the farmer's wife. "Oh, you poor, poor boys! Tell me, how did that happen?"

"We were afraid of a wild animal," said Danny softly.

"Only we didn't know it was just a dog, just that little dog there."

"Oh, you poor boys! How worried your mother must be now."

Just then the big farmer came into the house. He saw the boys too and heard all about how they were lost.

"That is too bad," and he shook his head. "That is too bad."

"Where do you boys live?" he asked.

"In our little house," said Dickie.

"But where is your little house?"





"By the woods," answered Danny.

"What is your father's name?"

"His name is John," said Dickie.

"Is your father a farmer?"

"No, he isn't," said Danny.

"Well, what does he do?"

"He wears a cap with a red band on it," answered Dickie.

"Oh, now I know! Now I know who you are and where you live."

"And now do you know what! I think I have a good idea."

He whispered a secret in his wife's ear.

And he whispered a secret in Minnie's ear, too.

"Yes, that is a good idea! Oh, yes, a very lovely idea!" they exclaimed together.

The big farmer quickly hurried from the room.

And so did his wife. And so did his daughter.

And, of course, so did Bobbie. "Arf, arf, arf!"

Danny and Dicky were left all alone on their bench by the fire. Under the bench stood their funny coffee pot. And that little coffee pot didn't say anything at all.

11. Mother is Worried

Mother was sitting in the cozy little house.

And she waited. Oh, yes, the potatoes were peeled long ago. Everything was ready.

Many, many times she glanced through the windows out into the white, white world. But her little boys didn't come. Where could they be?

It was snowing outside. It was snowing very hard now.

Mother was so worried about her boys.

She went to the door to look.

And Jeannie went to look, too. She peeked from behind Mother's skirt.

But no, the boys were nowhere to be seen.

Mother called, "Danny, Dickie, Danny!"

And Jeannie called, too, with her tiny voice, "Tanny, Tickie, Tanny!"

But Danny and Dickie didn't come at all.

Now Mother became frightened and very worried about her boys.

And then she saw Father coming.

But Father was alone, he was all alone.

He was carrying his shovel. He couldn't work any more today. It was snowing much too hard.

Mother became more frightened than ever. Father was coming back alone, and where could Danny and Dickie be?

"John, John," called Mother, "the boys are gone! Oh, why did I ever send them out into the woods today!"

Father became alarmed. He looked toward the woods, he looked down the path, he looked all around.

But the boys were nowhere to be seen.

Mother was crying. "Oh, what if they are lost? Lost in the snow? And night will be coming soon."

Father threw down his shovel. He said, "I'll go and

look for them right now. Don't worry too much Mother. They are sturdy little lads."

But Father looked anxious too. He hurried back to the woods. Mother watched until he disappeared among the trees.

The potatoes had been cooked a long time ago. But no one thought about food. Mother wasn't hungry. Father wasn't hungry. They were much too worried about their little boys.

Jeannie crept onto Mother's lap.

Together they watched at the window.

Little Jeannie snuggled up to Mother and said, "I'm a good little girl, Mommie. I'm not gone, am I, Mommie?"

Mother bent over her little girl.

She kissed her gently.

And there were big tears in her eyes.



12. Bells Across the Snow

"Jingle, jingle, jingle," do you hear the tinkling of bells across the snow?

Mother listened.

Jeannie listened.

"Jingle, jingle, jingle!"

What was that?

Mother looked. Little Jeannie looked.

They heard the little bells, but they couldn't see anything.

Oh, what a lovely sound, the tinkling of bells across the snow!

Mother pressed her nose against the window.

And little Jeannie pressed her tiny nose against the window.

The lovely music came closer.

"Jingle, jingle, jingle!"

Oh, and there it was!

A handsome sleigh, drawn by a beautiful black horse, was coming across the field. And there were bells, many bells on the horse's harness.

A big farmer held the reins. He cracked the whip. Oh, what a jolly man he was. His wife sat in the sleigh and so did a little girl.

And... and...

Mother became so excited, she almost pressed her nose through the window.

"There they are," she shouted, "there they are!"

She ran to the door and out into the snow.

And little Jeannie, in her stockingfeet, followed her mother out into the snow.

"Tanny, Tickie, Tanny!"

The sleigh had stopped at the little gate.

The beautiful black horse was breathing heavily, he had run so fast. The bells still rang softly, "Jingle, jingle!"

Mother ran out to her little boys. And Jeannie trotted right behind her.

A cute, little dog in the sleigh barked, "Arf, arf, arf!"

"You'd better grab them quickly," laughed the jolly farmer. "Your boys brought our little dog home, and now our dog is bringing your boys home. I guess that's only fair."

Mother hugged the boys. Danny in one arm and Dickie in the other.

"Oh, boys, boys, where have you been?"

Each boy had a lovely big orange in his hand.

And Danny held the coffee pot firmly against his chest.

And the funny old coffee pot said, "Cluck," but it was cold now, and the coffee was cold, too.

"Get up, Prince, get up!" shouted the jolly farmer.

And away went the sleigh with the jolly farmer and his wife, and his little girl, and Bobbie. "Jingle, jingle, jingle!"



"Thank you, thank you;" called Mother. "I'm so glad to have my boys home again. Thank you, thank you so very much!"

The big farmer laughed. He cracked his whip. He was very happy.

His wife waved with her scarf.

And Minnie called out, "Good bye, good bye!"

And Bobbie barked, "Arf, arf, arf!"

Of course, that meant: "We're all happy now, aren't we? We're all very happy! Good bye!"

Who was that man coming out of the woods? He looked so very sad.

But then . . . suddenly . . .



v.d. Hulst



He saw the sleigh.
And he saw the boys.
He didn't look sad any more.
Oh, no, he looked happy
then. He was so glad to see
them.

He waved his cap. There was
a red band around that cap.
Yes, it was Father.

He shouted, "Thank you! Thank you!"
But the handsome sleigh was gliding off into the great,
white world again.
"Jingle, jingle, jingle!"

13. Home Again

Now the little family is sheltered in their cosy little
home again... Like little birds in their warm nest.
They are sitting around the fireplace.
The flames crackle and sputter.
And outside it is beginning to get dark.
And it is very cold, and so very lonely.
Brrrrrr... Danny and Dickie hardly dare to look to-
ward the windows.
They would rather watch the flames in the friendly fire.

It is so cosy and so very nice.

The coffee pot is standing on the mantle. The cork is still in the long spout, and the string is still tied over the cover.



But the coffee is cold now, and the funny little coffee pot is quiet. It has nothing to say.

Now the boys tell their story, all of it, from beginning to end.

Father says, "It was really your own fault. You knew you shouldn't take that crooked little path."

And Mother says, "Oh, I'm so glad you are home. Look, it is getting dark outside. What if you boys were still sitting by the 'Three Old Men'? It makes me shudder just to think about it."

Danny and Dickie shudder, too. They glance quickly toward the windows and the great, white world outside.

Brrrrr... They try to snuggle closer to Mother. They try to sit just a little bit closer to the fire. It is just as if they are frightened again.

Evening has come.

Little Jeannie is fast asleep. A big, round orange lies

next to her rosy cheek. It's hers. The farmer's wife gave it to her.

It is bedtime for the boys. They climb the stairs to their little upstairs room.

Mother follows to tuck them in.

First they kneel beside the bed. Dickie looks up at Mother and says, "Mother, when we were lost in the woods we prayed, too."

Mother nods. There are tears of joy in her eyes. "I'm so glad to hear that, boys. The Lord sees everything. He saw you out there in the lonely woods and he took care of you. He cares for all of us. Mother has thanked him, too, for bringing you home safely. Oh, he has been so good to us today."

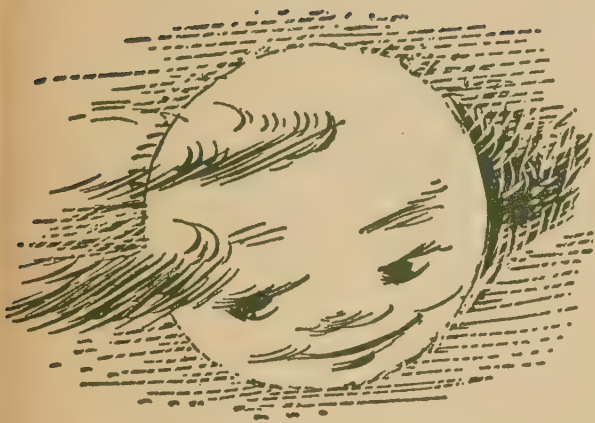
Then Mother goes downstairs again.

Danny and Dickie are tucked away under the warm blankets.

It is very quiet in their room and very dark.

"Say, I hear something," whispers Dickie, "I think it is a bear." And he crawls farther under the blankets. But Danny says, "Let's not play that. Let's play we are riding in the sleigh again. Shall we? That was such fun."

And there they go again for a wonderful ride through the dark woods, and into the land of sleep and dreams.



Night has come.

The little house is warm and cozy in its thick, white coat. The trees in the woods are wearing their white woolen caps pulled down over their ears.

And the whole world is fast asleep under its thick, white blanket of snow.

But tonight no little lost dog scratches at the door of the house. Oh, no, that little dog lies cuddled in his warm basket.

No little lost boys are wandering on the crooked path. Oh, no, those boys are riding in a lovely sleigh through the land of dreams.

The moon peeks from behind a cloud.

It peeks into the little upstairs window.

It smiles... There lies Danny in the sleigh. He has tucked Dickie's head under his arm. Perhaps he thinks he is still holding the funny little coffee pot. The moon laughs... And suddenly the great white world becomes a beautiful world of sparkling silver.



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